BRITISH COLUMBIA
The Best Place on Earth

ACHIEVEBC

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2007AE0001-000025
Jan. 16, 2007

Ministry of Advanced Education
Office of the Premier

PREMIER ANNOUNCES $29M FOR NEW UCFV CAMPUS

CHILLIWACK – The Province is investing more than $29 million to purchase 34 hectares of land and build a trades and technology centre for the University College of the Fraser Valley's new Chilliwack campus as part of B.C.'s first full-service education park, Premier Gordon Campbell announced today.

"In today's global marketplace it is important that we improve our competitiveness and productivity through enhanced education and skills training, which is the focus of the Canada Education Park," Campbell said. "UCFV's new trades centre will offer a range of training, including heavy duty commercial transport, automotive services, electronics, architectural drafting, cooking, carpentry, welding, joinery and electrical. It will help us meet the demand for highly trained, skilled workers in a variety of areas, an important part of our Pacific Leadership Agenda."

The Province is providing $7.6 million for UCFV to purchase 34 hectares within the park and $21.6 million for a major renovation of a 9,641-square-metre building to create the Trades and Technology Learning Centre. The centre is scheduled to open this fall with new classrooms, labs and shops, and 690 training spaces. UCFV's land purchase – almost as big as 50 football fields – anchors the park, which will serve up to 12,000 students and covers 80 hectares in all.

UCFV expects to have 1,800 students on the campus by the end of the decade. Other partners joining UCFV at the park include the Justice Institute of B.C., the RCMP and the World Trade University. UCFV is also in discussions with several Chinese universities, as well as the Chilliwack school district. The school district and UCFV are planning to integrate the K-12 and post-secondary systems to boost student participation and completion rates at all levels. The Justice Institute and the RCMP are already operating on the site.

"By 2010, the expanded space will accommodate twice as many UCFV students at the Chilliwack campus to meet the educational needs of B.C.'s fastest-growing area," said Advanced Education Minister Murray Coell. "The Trades and Technology Learning Centre will support that growth by providing the highly skilled workers needed in the Fraser Valley and throughout British Columbia."

In addition to investing in land and new buildings, the Province is funding 1,700 new student spaces at UCFV as part of its 25,000-seat expansion plan. The post-secondary seat expansion is part of government's goal to make British Columbia the best-educated, most literate place in North America.

-more-

"Since Premier Campbell's July 2004 endorsement of the planning process for relocating our Chilliwack campus to the education park, we've been eager to see our dreams become reality," said UCFV president Skip Bassford. "We're looking forward to creating this vibrant centre of learning for a student body and a community truly in need of it."

-30-

Media contact:

Mike Morton
Press Secretary
Office of the Premier
250 213-8218

Jennifer McCrea
Communications Director
250 952-6508
250 888-0023 (cell)

For more information on government services or to subscribe to the Province's news feeds using RSS, visit the Province's website at www.gov.bc.ca.